Because they do know the fact and the participant, thus what each participant can say, it was not difficult for Nixon and his advisers to anticipate the disclosures before the Ervin committee and leaking in anticipation of the testimony. Nixon, ever the improviser and copier, knwoing that his private gestapo would, inevitably, be exposed, prepared what for him was a long statement. It ran to about 4,000 words. It was rather less than a literary, legal or factual masterpiece. In it he admitted less than had been exposed and gave what had been exposed a special context: he had violated the law, and subverted the entire political process and the Constitution for "national security". He put it in phrases designed to make it seem loftier than this meanness, but it boils down to this.

It was the forced confession of a dictator.

Wrong becomes right when Richard Nixon does wrong.

This is vintage Nixon.

It is also pure Orwell, with Nixon as Big Brother.

It is the philosophy of the Checkers speech.

On its performance to that moment, the Ervin committee could be estimated to have the intention of doing much less than was easily possible, as long as it made what the media would accept as a good job. With an unparalleled script, in effect a president on public trial for the first time in history, almost anything would be and in this case was touted as super-sensation. To most viewers, listeners and readers the committee's hearings were, indeed, sensational. But to an experienced investigator, and analyst or just one who would take time to thing, the hearings were superficial. The obvious and indicated questions were not asked. One of the many simple examples is in the questioning of Bernard Barker, Hunt's honcho from Bay of Pigs days.

It had already been well publicized that Barker had commited other crimes and that among them was his handling of the first of the tainted CREEP money. The money was known to include a $25,000 check from Dwayne Andreas and $89,000 from Texas oilmen that was "Laundered" by being sent to Mexico and coming back to the United States in the form of checks that, as part of a,larger stache, was then flown to Washington in a private pil-

company airplane. Barker was not asked a single question about this. The scheme was to make it impossible to trace this illegal contribution to the President's re-election campaign of money that was spent in violation of many laws, incldding election laws. The commission's mission was to investigate the election, in the broadest, most all-encompassing manner. So, if it asked not a single question of the man who had handled this large sum of the first two illegal contributions detected and then had spent this illegal money in crimes that blew the whole thing open, the committee provided a dependable measure of what could be expected of it unless it really got down to work.

This was not the measure of the headlines and gasping TV commentaries. It was the measure Richard Nixon took. For the first time in the entire mess, then almost a year old, he took the initiative, became once again the Old Old Nixon, the man who attacks. It was not recognizied as his first taking of the initiative. The media did not explain that he was shifting to the attack in his 4,000 words of partial confession of what was not news any more. From this combination, of the committee content with headlines and not anxious to prode deeply and the aggressive Nixon, one of the obvious estimates of what was to follow is that the copier Nixon would become the Nixon of UnAmericanism, the Nixon of "20 years of treason", and his victims in his long catalogue of illegalities would become victims again, this time as The Enemy against who he was defending the country. All his crookedness would suddenly be presented as the course of honor and the means by which he had "saved" the country.

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